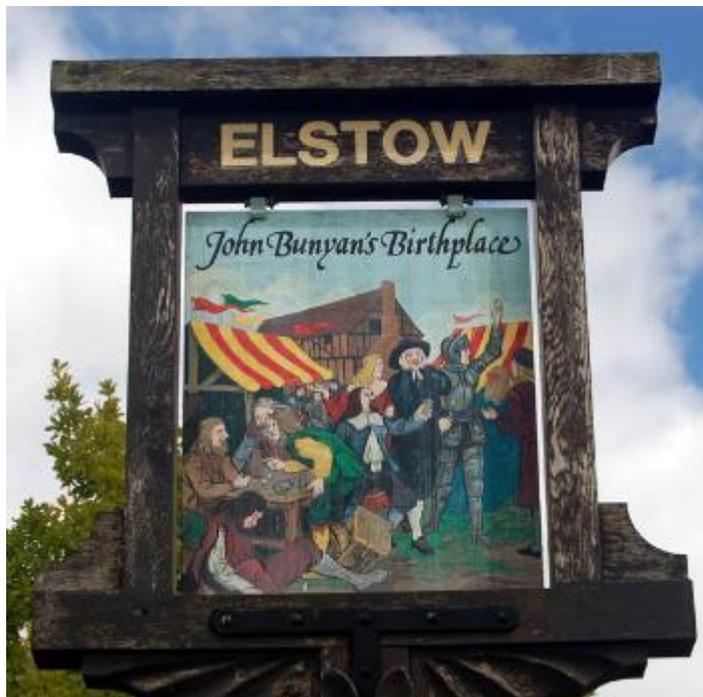


ELSTOW VILLAGE NEWSLETTER



NOVEMBER 2011

Elstow Parish Council

As always the Parish Council has continued to be busy and very active over the past few months.

Your Parish Council has completed the 'PlayBuilder' scheme to provide a play area targeted at 7-14 year-olds; more information on this project can be found later in the newsletter.

The Council have been working on and looking at ways to make the street lights on the High Street more in keeping with the historic buildings and setting. Much time has been spent liaising with lighting technicians on how best to achieve this. Some residents may have noticed that during September three street lights were switched off along West End/High Street; this was a temporary exercise and feedback from residents was very beneficial. Work will continue on this project which is a main priority for the Parish Council at the moment.

Another important matter at present is ensuring safety outside the Lower School. The Parish Council organised a meeting with Parking, Highways, Police Officers and the Headteacher to consider different options available. All present were very concerned about hazardous parking and the speed of vehicles, especially during drop-off and pick-up times. A number of actions were agreed - some works are planned to take place shortly and all parties involved are committed to following up with enforcement visits and regular reviews of the situation.

The Parish Council was also consulted and commented on the recent application at the Old Lower School site for twelve new dwellings and conversion of the former school building into four residential units. The Council objected to the application on a number of grounds; however, as the local planning authority, it is Bedford Borough Council who will be making the decision on the application shortly.

There are a number of improvement works that have been carried out in the village recently:

- The new bus shelter on the High Street close to the Post Office has been installed
- Vegetation maintenance work has been carried throughout the year on the Wilstead Road footpath that runs up to the A6
- The A6 Tunnel Graffiti project was successfully completed and lots of fun was had by all who took part

- A new lawnmower for the Churchyard was purchased and the Council funded the maintenance of the graveyard through the year
- A donation was made to the May Festival of £320 to pay for the entertainment provided by the band

The Police regularly attend the Council meetings and provide updates on police matters. If you need to report anything suspicious, or would like to speak to the Police, our Community Officers for Elstow are PCSO's Emily Scott and Adam Hales; they can be contacted on 842433.

The Parish Council will next meet on Tuesday 29th November at 7.30pm in the Playing Field Hall. The public is welcome to attend and contribute.

As always, if anyone would like to bring any matters to the attention of the Parish Council, then please feel free to contact Lizzie, Parish Clerk, on 841835.

IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER

If you would like to offer comments, help out in any way, write/submit an article for a future edition or even fancy editing the newsletter then please contact the Parish Clerk, Lizzie, on 841835.

INFORMATION FROM THE POLICE

There has been a significant increase in burglaries in Bedford and the surrounding villages over the last few months. Can members of the public please report to the police any suspicious people/activity in their streets on 01234 841212 - AT THE TIME OF SEEING THE PERSON, not later. Also please remember to lock windows and doors.

The number for the local Safer Neighbourhood Team for Elstow is 01234 842433.

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLOR TIM HILL REPORT:

Election

I am humbled to have been elected as the Borough Councillor for:

- a) Elstow and most of Kempston Hardwick for the first time
- b) All of Stewartby and a small part of Kempston Hardwick for the third time

Ward Fund

Please let me know of any ideas you have for what I can use my Ward Fund for in 2011/12 to the benefit of the Parish of Elstow.

I am aiming to use some of it as a contribution towards the Parish Council Project to change the street lights in the High Street to ones that better reflect the Conservation Area. As agreed at the July 2011 Parish Council meeting, this along with a Parish Council contribution and a possible contribution from the Mayor's Climate Change Fund should ensure some more appropriate lights can be installed.

Village-wide Issues

- a) Wilstead Road footpath - I am pressing the Council to find out why this was not properly installed or regularly maintained
- b) Elstow Lower School Parking - I am working with the Parish Council and Cllr Charles Royden as Portfolio Holder to ensure some effective measures can be installed to ensure no further children are knocked down by inconsiderate parkers
- c) Speeding in Abbey Fields - I am working with Cllr Charles Royden as Portfolio Holder to see what can be done to enforce the likely new 20mph speed limit near the school. I have also volunteered to take part in a Parish Council initiative to use the Borough Council speed gun to monitor speeding cars

Local Issues

Since my election in May, I have amongst other local issues progressed the following raised by residents:

- a) Poor state of tree supports on green at entrance to Waltham Drive
- b) Wheely bin full of soil left between 18 and 19 Bunyans Mead
- c) Vandalised bin outside The Red Lion

- d) Grass verge near 9, Bayham Close needs cutting
- f) Poor state of West End/Progress Way roundabout
- g) Grass verge in Wigram Close needs cutting
- h) Bunyans Mead footpath - dropped kerb and general tidy-up of weeds and litter, plus repair of worst paving slabs
- j) Litter bin on Romsey Way play area site
- k) Proposed development near Interchange Retail Park

Contact me

Please don't hesitate to contact me on any local issue by any of the following means:

Tel (day): 0131 448 4270

Tel (eve): 07910100240

email: tim.hill@bedford.gov.uk

Web site: <http://timhill.mycouncillor.org.uk/>

DID YOU KNOW.....?

The Name of Elstow

The name ("Helenstow") is found in many places, for instance in 1811 when Samuel Lewis, in his "*Topographical Dictionary of England*" writes of "Elstow church, formerly Helestowe"; or again in 1885 when John Brown, in his "*John Bunyan: his life, time and work*", writes of the "*stow* or stockaded place of St Helen" and goes on to elaborate, saying that Helenstow "was so called because of the dedication of the old Saxon (*sic*) church to Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great".

The earliest references to the village and Abbey of Elstow such as in the Domesday Book are to "Elenestowe." In the Dissolution documents of 1539 it is firmly "Elnestowe".

Tim Elliott

Play Area off Romsey Way

Earlier in the year the Elstow Parish Council raised funds for a new Play Area (between Romsey Way and Wilstead Road) specifically targeting the 7-14 years age group. The bulk of the funds came from a Central Government scheme (PlayBuilder), dedicated for Play equipment to which we submitted a bid and were successful in securing a grant. The play equipment installed was selected after consultation with groups of local children and is clearly proving very popular as can be seen by its continual use. This provides a fantastic facility for Elstow and it is hoped the local community will do all they can to look after it and assure it remains available for many more children to use over the coming years.

Sadly, acts of wilful vandalism are already evident, specifically graffiti with felt tip pens, and this has required ongoing focus and repairs. This issue of graffiti has been raised with the Police for advice and action to target those responsible. We appeal to the entire community to help ensure the play equipment is enjoyed and not damaged. It will be very sad if the equipment is wilfully damaged to the extent it becomes unsafe and unusable for future children to enjoy. Elstow Parish Council are committed to provide the facility, but keen to avoid wasting future funds undertaking repairs outside of those expected from general wear and tear.

More recently, a waste bin and an additional dog waste bin have both been installed and are now being well used. We are in dialogue with the Borough Council to ensure the waste bin is emptied with sufficient frequency so it does not overflow, as was the case initially. There continues to be too much litter dropped on the ground in and around the Play Area. We have debated providing a second waste bin in the area if this could help. It is perceived some children will simply drop litter on the floor irrespective of the number of bins provided, but we need to challenge this as being unacceptable. Please encourage your own children to make use of the bin provided and not to drop litter on the floor that others will have to pick up later. We hope the Play Area remains well used and provides enjoyment for many children now and in the future. Any feedback on this is most welcome.

Remembrance Sunday - 97 years on

Dear Friends and Parishioners,

A few months ago I bought the new Vera Lynn greatest hits album, and I suddenly came across the song: **UP THE WOODEN HILL TO BEDFORDSHIRE** - what a lovely and moving song it is:

Up the wooden hill to Bedfordshire
Heading for the land of dreams
When I look back to those happy childhood days
Like yesterday it seems
It was grand my mother held my hand
Daddy was the old gee-gee
The old wooden hill was the old wooden stairs
and Bedfordshire of course where I knelt to say my prayers
Climbing up the wooden hill to Bedfordshire
They were happy happy days for me

Last night I dreamt about the place where I was born
The village school the winding lane the fields of waving corn
Seems that dream brought memories to me
My childhood days in fanciness I could see
When the sun had gone to rest and I was tired of play
Dad would put me on his back and then to me he'd say..
Up the wooden hill to Bedfordshire

(VERA LYNN SONG - Lyrics supplied by Jill Daniels)

On this Sunday we remember those who gave their lives, not just in the two World Wars but in countless conflicts since. What were they giving their lives for - to protect home? To make the world safe for democracy? I offer you a quotation that I would like to explore: **"To sacrifice one's life is to achieve one's maximum, for in doing so man bears witness to the truth and reality that is both above and beyond himself"**.

This quote is about personal redemption and it is the sense of sacrifice for belief whatever it may be that matters. It is also about society, community and our life together on this planet.

On Remembrance Sunday we think about conflict. We remember those who died for their cause. Their cause was our future. Why do we make the special effort on this day to remember them? We do so because memory is integral to identity. We honour those who gave their lives for us and in doing so we state who we are. But have we learnt anything from all the terrible things that have gone on over the last 100 years? Yes and no - there are some things that every generation has to learn for itself. Every one of us must learn to achieve a balance between the two sides of our nature, our uniqueness as individuals, with our identity providing beliefs - religious and personal, and our membership of society, community, nation or tribe - between our believing and our belonging. And here is the link: redemption is not unique to belief, to commitment to a cause, to justification - of anything - by faith. Redemption is also possible through reconciliation.

But for redemption to work we have to live our lives not only by our beliefs, however strongly they are held and whatever meaning they give to our lives; not only as members of our community, whether religious or secular, or our tribe, however defined, or our nation. We must live our lives by the acceptance of our membership of the human race that is the family of God. For that is where we truly belong.

With Best Wishes,
Jeremy Crocker
Team Rector

ELSTOW CRICKET CLUB REPORT

That was the season that was. The 'c' word proved to be the club's undoing in a strange summer at The Warren. Commitment or rather, the lack thereof cost the club valuable points across all facets of senior cricket which meant that the real Elstow never had the chance to show itself. Fifth position for Matt Stevens' first team was an improvement on last year, but there is left a sense of what might have been. The first XI lost six times this year, most of those defeats to teams above them. Champions North Crawley finished the season unbeaten but they were given the mother of all scares in a pulsating encounter at The Warren where they limped home by 5 runs. There is undeniably the talent at the club (witness the undoubted potential of Rani Thiarra and Rob Tebbutt to name but two) to break into the top three, if perhaps not the belief and this result probably best underlines this.

The 2nd XI's final league position was down a couple of places to sixth this year. The wretched end to the summer; Lewy's Light Brigade skittled all out for 54 to champions Crawley Green Nomads at Wardown Park, Luton was a cataclysmic conclusion to what felt like a long summer. Relegation stalked the side for much of the season yet Will Wisson's charges put together a terrific run in early August that made them look bona fide promotion hopefuls; Pete Burraway and Hikmat Waqar were the undoubted stars in this enjoyable rally. However, despite the undoubted talent that lurks within the ranks, a fourth season in Division 5 is one more than anyone would have wanted yet this is the stark reality that confronts all those involved with the seconds.

The Midweek team's season mirrored their Saturday counterparts, brilliant at times, bewildering at others. The team finished a creditable third behind Thurleigh and Bedford Pakistanis, mostly down to the heroic efforts of the captain, Thomas Wisson, but it was in the head-to-head encounters against these two sides where their title ambitions came unstuck. There is little doubt that midweek cricket in Bedfordshire doesn't carry the lustre it used to and the apparent county-wide apathy to this form of the game seems to have seeped into the fabric at Elstow too. Decisions will need to be made regarding the club's approach to this

area at the *AGM* along with other important choices in relation to the senior playing structure at the club.

Indoor cricket: The inevitable demise of summer brings the action indoors for the winter months. Both sides are back in action on Sunday mornings from October onwards. The 1st team play their fixtures at The Bunyan Centre and welcome Thomas Wisson for his first season in charge. Will Wisson continues in his role as second team captain, their matches take place at Bedford College. Your support of both teams is hugely appreciated.

For all the latest goings on at The Warren, log on to www.elstowcc.co.uk or indeed, if you are looking to get involved in local cricket, please get in touch at elstowcricketclub@hotmail.co.uk

ELSTOW VILLAGE EVENTS

- Saturday 19th November 1-3pm Elstow Abbey Christmas Fayre to be held at EBCF
- Sunday 20th November 9 am - noon Table Top sale at Playing Field Hall. More details from 01234 300889. Refreshments available
- Monday 28th November 6.30pm Choral concert at Elstow Abbey, featuring the church choir and choirs from the two local schools. Tickets on the door
- Sunday 11th December 3pm Christingle Service at Elstow Abbey
- Saturday 24th December 2pm & 4pm Crib Services at Elstow Abbey
11.30pm Midnight Mass at Elstow Abbey
- Christmas Day 10.30am Holy Communion service at Elstow Abbey

If you would like an event you are holding included in a future edition, please contact the Parish Clerk, Lizzie, on 841835 or send an email with details of the event. lizzie_barnicoat@hotmail.com

WHY NOT TRY BOWLS?

Short Mat indoor Bowls are played Wednesday evenings 7-30pm-10pm & Thursday afternoons 2pm-4-30pm at the Playing Field Hall. Come along and have a go. We can lend you the bowls, just bring some flat-soled shoes.

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

ELSTOW PARISH COUNCIL

Website: elstow.bedsparishes.gov.uk

Mrs. Sue Anderson	Chair	01234 309280
Mr. Lloyd Allison		07789 741933
Mr. Dennis Carr		01234 213068
Rev. Jeremy Crocker		01234 261477
Mr. Richard Fitzmaurice		01234 326151
Mr. Tony Hare		01234 358883
Mr. Bill Holman		01234 294598
Mr. Crispin Maddocks		07740 538198
Mr. Bob Lammin		01234 407097

Mrs. Lizzie Barnicoat	Clerk to the Council	01234 841835
	email: lizzie_barnicoat@hotmail.com	

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLOR

Mr. Tim Hill		07910 100240
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POLICE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

PCSO Emily Scott and PCSO Adam Hales		01234 842433
	Email: emily.scott@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk	

THE ABBEY CHURCH

Rev. Jeremy Crocker		01234 261477
Church Wardens: Mrs. Tracey Hinson		01234 406061
	Mrs. Barbara Routledge	01234 854369

BUNYAN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Mr. Brian Addington		01234 216080
Elaine Bentham		01234 402833

ELSTOW PLAYING FIELD

Mrs. Margaret Hinson		01234 349028
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ELSTOW LOWER SCHOOL

Head Teacher		01234 302300
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ABBAY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Head Teacher		01234 401401
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